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MONTANA STATE LIBRARY STATE DOCUMENTS

NETWORK NEWS

1st issue

April 9, 1974

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The Montana State Library Networks program is taking on a new look with the help of ISCA Title III funds.

When Title III funds for 1973 were released, the Library Commission approved, the State Budget Office okayed, the order letter was mailed and now we are waiting impatiently for the installation of the Western Union TWX machines. Hopefully they should all be in and operating before the end of June.

We would like this news sheet to serve as an exchange and clearing house for network questions, inspirations, complaints, suggestions, and such comments as can be printed in a family type newsletter.

THINGS TO CONSIDER !!

Item 1: When the machine comes into your library, where are you going to put it? This is a question each library decides for itself. Consider the size of the machine. It is about the size of a typewriter and table. There should be file cabinets and supply cupboards near. The machine is quite noisy when operating and should not be close to a telephone. On the other hand since the purpose of the machine is rapid transmittal of requests, it should not be stuck away in a closet where requests can pile up unnoticed. Having it near the card catalog would save time searching for titles; near the stacks would save a lot of walking; close to the reference or ILL desk would permit it to be closely supervised. Maybe there is only one place in your library for it - Fine, no problem.

Item 2: There have been questions about the payment of the line charges for the use of the machines. The State Library and the Mountain States Regional Medical Program will pay the charges for interlibrary loan requests but libraries who use the machines for other purposes will be expected to pay those added costs. We have estimated costs on the basis of ten minutes of use a day. This may or may not be realistic and will be revised to meet the situation.

Item 3: The TWX machines are being installed in the State Library, a Federation headquarters, in the two University libraries and in three hospital libraries. It is expected that the library who has a machine will transmit requests for other libraries in the area. This means that academic libraries will be helping public libraries; public libraries will be transmitting hospital requests, and those areas served by hospital machines will be sending public library requests. This will bring us all together in fine style. Sharing and cooperation are the very center of network operation and the machines will give us more to share.

Item 4: The matter of records. It will be necessary to keep accurate transaction records at least in the beginning to simplify correction of errors caused by confused operators and bewildered recipients. We will need to keep a log book of use of the machine in order to get some kind of realistic basis for estimating line charges.

Montana State Library



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Item 5: There will be some confusion at first and we ask that you bear with us as we try to work out an efficient and useable system. The telephone is always handy for explanation when the machine defeats us. Remember - we shall overcome. Have patience!

Item 6: The hotline to the State Library will still be maintained and can always be used by any library in the state. We do want to strengthen the federation headquarters libraries as the basic building stones in our Montana network system. We ask that the libraries within a federation, channel their requests through the headquarter library. The State Library will pay cost of direct telephone service between libraries in a Federation and the headquarter library for interlibrary loan requests.

Item 7: For your Comment - The following advice was given by a librarian from California regarding establishing a TWX network system: "Have good lines of communication with all your participating libraries. Don't flood them with contradictory memos every other day, but do let them know what is going on." This way you just might get them to trust you." That explains this newsletter!

Item 8: We are hoping to have some kind of meeting (informal) of the Interlibrary and network staffs of the various libraries at the MLA meetings in Great Falls, May 9. Several people have made suggestions of items to be discussed. Some of these are:

- What record forms are currently being used?

- What statistics are kept?

- What tools are available for verifying?

- How much verifying must be done?

- What restrictions on what should be asked for through ILL? paperbacks? new books? juveniles? genealogy?

- What should be ordered direct?

If you have other items to be considered, send them in and we will make an agenda. Any forms or records you want to share, send them in also and we will duplicate copies.

Item 9: Warning: PNBC is making changes in its reporting system. Stand by for further word.

Item 10: If you are still reading this - we will try to get out another "Network News" before MLA.

As one fish said to the other as they were pulled into the boat, " -ah! that networks!"

La Vern Kohl

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General Services Coordinator

